1: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

from *Snuɬɬi*. My informant's grandchildren regard themselves as *Snuɬɬi* boys, and their names are embodied in myths of that village, although their forbears have not lived there for five generations. There is no reason to suppose this case exceptional. Other instances were obtained of movements of people from one village to another at earlier times, and there seems no cause to doubt the general accuracy of these. Names embodied in the origin myths of different towns are used as prerogatives and have been potent factors in keeping their memory alive. Uncertainties and inaccuracies there must be in the foregoing list, but on the whole it appears to be fairly reliable, since few contradictions were received from different informants.

Accounts obtained of the same ceremonies from the descendants of people of different villages were found in most cases to be identical. There were a few differences in custom between the people of *Stuix* and those of the other upper valley towns on the one hand, and the inhabitants of the lower valley on the other. These will be mentioned when necessary, but on the whole the inhabitants of the Bella Coola valley can be considered as a tribal entity.

Boas (p. 48) gives a list of Bella Coola towns which agrees fairly well with the above. Among his villages are included *Pe·ɔɬɬ* (no. 4), *Nuɬɣɣtskwaɬ·e* (no. 7), and *Nusälsum* (no. 16).[13] All the older people agreed that these are the names of streams, though settlements located on them may have been known by the same designations. Names of the five villages recorded by Boas, nos. 6, 8, 9, 19, and 24, were not known by several old men questioned on the subject.

The villages of the Bella Coola valley did not form a political unit; each was independent. A common language was spoken throughout and the inhabitants of the different towns recognized that their origins and customs were similar. This was also recognized to be the case with regard to the people living on South Bentinck Arm, and at the head of Dean Channel.

[13] Using in each case the spelling of this monograph.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

opened out on to a wooden platform, which served as sidewalk and extended from one end of the settlement to the other. The outer side of this structure was always supported on piles; in fact, in many cases, the houses as well as the whole sidewalk were thus raised from the ground. This type of construction was necessitated by the sloping sites of the villages, but had the added advantage of being a protection against attack. The villages differed in size from insignificant settlements of three to four houses, to ones with twenty or thirty, each containing several families. The ease with which the red cedar could be split and worked into large planks made possible the construction of these large, rectangular houses which, with their horizontally laid walls and sloping roofs, presented a picture of stability and relative comfort superior to that of most Indian habitations.

Each village was practically an independent political unit. Neighbouring settlements had many common interests which threw them into contact with one another, but there was no organized cohesion between the towns of the Bella Coola valley, or between those of *Tăl·io* and Kimsquit. There was still less to draw these three groups together. There was no supreme chief and no governmental meeting of the tribe as a whole. Not only were the three divisions not bound to support one another in war, they were often at loggerheads among themselves. Indeed, bloodshed between towns of the Bella Coola valley itself was not uncommon. Moreover, each group tended to merge with its neighbours. The *Tăl·io* people frequently married with the Rivers Inlet and the Bella Bella; the Kimsquit with the *ɛstămɣ*[11] of Dean Channel and the Kitlobe of Gardner Canal; and the Bella Coola of the upper valley with the Carriers.

In spite of these inconsistencies, the application of the word *tribe* is justifiable for the following reasons:

A. Linguistic. All spoke the same language. There were dialectical differences among the people of Bella Coola, *Tăl·io*, and Kimsquit, but each group could understand the

[11] To avoid unnecessary symbols, capital ɛ has not been used.